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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the educational levels of 196 inmates (85 percent male, most Caucasian, 5 ethnic groups represented) of the Cumberland County Jail (CCJ) in Portland, Maine, using a self-perception instrument and the results of the Tests of Applied Literacy Skills. Information was obtained regarding gender, age, recidivism, highest level of educational attainment, special education services received and perceived, and intent to pursue a General Educational Development (GED) diploma. In addition, information about how this population performed in a test was compared to that of the national prison population reported in the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS). The results demonstrate that, although CCJ inmates usually rated their abilities as high and they performed as well as or better than national levels for incarcerated populations, they did not demonstrate proficiency levels that would enable them to achieve greater social or economic success. More than one-fourth of the sample reported known learning disabilities or difficulties. Although nearly one-third indicated that they would like to pursue a GED, most of those inmates said they would need tutorial or remedial services first. (The study report contains 15 references, the survey instrument, 3 tables and 8 figures illustrating survey results, and two figures providing information on the NALS.) (Author/KC)

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Education Within Corrections

A Study Pertinent to Cumberland County

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe the educational needs of the inmates housed at the Cumberland County Jail (CCJ) located in Portland, Maine. This study describes present levels educational functioning: (1) as reported by the inmates themselves using a self-perception instrument, and (2) as reported in the results of actual testing using the Tests of Applied Literacy Skills.

The sample was comprised of incarcerated males (85%) and females (15%) who volunteered to participate in the study. Five ethnic groups comprised the sample: Caucasian, African American, Native American, Asian, and Hispanic. Information regarding gender, age, recidivism, highest level of educational attainment, special education services received and perceived, and intent to pursue a GED was obtained. In addition, information regarding how this population performed in an actual testing situation was compared to that of the national prison population reported by the National Center for Educational Statistics (1994) in areas of Prose, Document, and Quantitative Literacy.

The results demonstrate that while CCJ inmates usually rated their abilities as high, and they performed as well or better than national levels for incarcerated populations, they did not demonstrate proficiency levels that would enable them to meet with greater social or economic success. More than one quarter of the sample reported known learning disabilities or difficulties. And while nearly one third (32.4%) indicated that they would like to pursue a GED, 30.6% indicated that they would need tutorial or remedial services before they could access such a program.

Education Within Corrections
A Study Pertinent to Cumberland County

Background

The Cumberland County Jail (CCJ), located in Portland, Maine, is regarded as "the state of the art facility north of Boston" (Newton, 1996). At present, it has the capacity to house approximately 350 inmates, and is staffed by 120 correctional officers and 11 administrators. This facility, like others within the State of Maine, is required by law to provide opportunities for the inmates to earn the equivalent of a high school diploma. In 1996, the contractual agreement between Portland Adult Education (PAE) and the CCJ for providing educational services to the inmate population ended. Efforts to negotiate a new contract broke down primarily do to an inability to reach consensus on the kinds of programs to be delivered and the costs associated with implementation of programs (Queior, 1997). No educational programs were carried out at the jail for approximately nine months. At this time efforts are underway to establish and implement a program that will meet the requirements dictated by the law and the Department of Corrections.

Prioritizing learner needs is at the forefront of efforts now underway. A team of administrators and educational consultants is hopeful that a program, guided by an educational director and administered in part by trained correctional officers, will be in place in the very near future. The focus will center around inmate participation in a program that will allow them to acquire a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. Dan Queior who presently serves as the educational staff person at CCJ reported that during 1996, GEDs were obtained by 16 inmates. The previous year yielded numbers in the low 30's. Participation in the program has been considered quite good.

Notwithstanding the problems associated with establishing a new educational program at the Cumberland County Jail, questions arose concerning the preparedness of inmates for educational programs. The Maine Department of

Corrections Adult Master Plan Update (1990) indicates that "Today, the world of work offers a much broader range of basic skill occupations, to even those with minimum formal education, that far transcends GED and a vocational welding course. A broader range and a more sophisticated spectrum of correctional education need be considered for current correctional education" (p. 128). And, "In summary, the basic correctional education programming in Maine needs to be brought up-to-date. Correctional education, from basic literacy through advanced academic and vocational skill training, should be seen as a potent force against recidivism" (p. 128).

Review of the Literature

In 1939, MacCormick reported the results of a 1929 survey of United States prison education for the National Society of Penal Information. He had visited 110 institutions - all but four nationwide. Ten years later, he summarized his findings:

> The educational work of most prisons, in brief, consists of an academic school closely patterned after public schools for juveniles, having a low aim, enrolling students unselectively, inadequately financed, inexpertly supervised and taught, occupying mean quarters and using poor equipment and textural material. (MacCormick, 1939, p. 24)

This vignette of MacCormick's assessment of correctional education programs has been used to ask how the first survey of nearly 65 years ago compares or contrasts with modern experiences. Are educational programs within the correctional setting adequate to meet the needs of those involved?

Correctional education programs came into existence in the 1800's, but not until the 1930's did they begin to play a role in prisoner rehabilitation, or to receive acceptance with regard to their potential effect on prisoners. Programs focused on academic and vocational education. The 1960's brought post secondary programs into the correctional setting (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995). Many kinds of correctional education programs exist today. Some a voluntary while others like the Boot Camp Program can be mandatory (Christenberry, Burns, & Dickinson, 1994).

A 1993 study reported that nearly 60% of the inmates in our jails are high school dropouts and an undisclosed portion of these have learning disabilities. (Winters & Mathew, 1993). The General Accounting Office (GAO) indicated that eleven percent (11%) of the prisoners reported having learning disabilities compared with only three percent (3%) of the general population (National Center for Education Statistics, 1994).

Strawderman (1993) revealed three major categories pertinent to what inmates felt were obstacles to obtaining their education. These were: (1) motivation, (2) problem solving, and (3) confidence and trust. Students felt that the greatest barrier was their ability to trust in themselves or an authority figure usually the teacher. Recommendations based on his findings were that inmates needed help in setting both long and short term goals as well as staying motivated, and that educational programming needed to be carried out systematically eliminating disruptions.

Rationale for Correctional Education

Van Waters (1995) contends that there are many similarities between education within the more familiar public institutions and education within correctional facilities:

> Both are intense inner worlds of their own, saying that they wish to prepare for life, but remaining curiously aloof from life as the general public lives it. Both have rigid ancient traditional wisdom, their ritual and superstitions, yet have called on modern medicine, psychology, psychiatry, science and the arts to aid. (Van Waters, 1995, p.79)

She also believes:

> Prisons present a sterner realism: neither the system nor the student can escape an ultimate reckoning. No one can be expelled. Those who graduate without equipment for economic survival, or without incentive to live harmlessly with their neighbor are returned for another term. The sick are cared for under the same roof. The traitors and the loyal share the same bread. (Van Waters, 1995, p.79)

Vito (1994) asserts that there are many reasons for the continuance of educational programs within the correctional setting. The need for correctional education programs has been demonstrated repeatedly in the low level(s) of education among the incarcerated as compared to the general public as well as the need for education to meet with any kind of economic success (Vito, 1994).

Gerber and Fritsch (1995) believe that education within the correctional setting leads to lower rates of recidivism because "First, inmates could become more conscientious as a result of moral development exposure..." (Gordon & Arbuthnot, 1987, pp. 290-324) and "Second, and alternatively, inmates may benefit because they have better credentials upon release which leads to more positive opportunities" (Merton, 1938, pp. 372-382).

Participation

In an attempt to provide data which accurately reports a level of participation of incarcerated high school dropouts in county jail programs, Tobolowsky, Quinn, and Holman (1991) conducted research at the Denton County Detention Center, Denton, Texas. Of the entire population (227), 212 volunteers participated in a survey designed to determine the extent to which inmates who had dropped out of high school accessed programs offered at the facility. Results indicated that 26.7% of the high school dropouts were participating in one or more of the programs offered.

Stephens (1992) conducted research during the summer of 1989 at New York State's Sing Sing Maximum Security Facility for men. Of the 251 questionnaires distributed, 220 (88%) were returned completed. Analysis revealed that 173 (79%) were high school dropouts. Of that number, 103 (60%) had acquired a GED with 89 (86%) acquiring that GED while incarcerated.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of this study was two-fold: (1) to accurately describe the educational needs of the inmate population as reported by the inmates themselves, and (2) to provide educational planners and administrators with information that might be used in

the development of programs that will assist inmates with GED preparation and life skills. It was felt that the goal(s) would be met by addressing the following objectives: (1) by determining how many of the present CCJ inmate population had not obtained a high school diploma or GED; (2) by determining how many of the CCJ inmate population received or feel that they should have received special education or other remedial instruction while in school; (3) by determining how many of the the CCJ inmate population said they would like to pursue a GED; (4) by determining how many of the CCJ inmate population said they will need assistance before they can access the GED program; and (5) by determining how many of the sample population said they encountered difficulties in those areas which are life skill based.

Methodology

Permission to undertake this research project was granted by Major Jeffrey L. Newton, Jail Administrator, in a letter dated November 25, 1996. All activities were coordinated through Captain Francine Breton and were in accordance with policies and procedures established by the Cumberland County Sheriff's Department. It was agreed that information obtained from this study would be shared with Major Newton's office and others responsible for the care and education of the inmate population housed at the Cumberland County Jail.

Sample

The sample for the survey portion of this study was drawn from a predetermined population of inmates housed at the Cumberland County Jail on February 18, 19, and 25, 1997. Male and female volunteers from minimum, medium, and special needs classifications (Pods B2, C1, C2A, C2B, and C3) participated. The average of the in-house inmate population for these dates was 241 persons (not counting juveniles and those housed in pre-release or off-site facilities). Surveys were offered to 196 inmates (81.327%). Returned completed surveys were obtained from 122 inmates (62.244%).

Instrument

The instrument used to conduct the survey portion of the study was in the form of a cross sectional survey with closed ended questions directly administered to inmates. The instrument was designed to provide information regarding: gender, age, the number of repeat offenders participating in the study, highest level of education completed, number of participants holding a high school diploma or a GED, participation in special education services, perceived need for special education services, known learning disabilities or difficulties, intention to pursue a GED certificate while incarcerated, and stated need for tutorial help before embarking on a plan of study aimed at acquiring a GED.

Volunteers were also asked to indicate any willingness to participate in reading and mathematics testing to help determine educational needs of inmates. Those responding positively would be scheduled to be assessed using the Educational Testing Service Test of Applied Literacy Skills (ETS/TALS). This portion would be used to compare the needs of the inmates to needs/results obtained from actual test results. The test (ETS/TALS) is designed to be administered to adults in groups and uses a timed direct administration approach. The test provides assessment in three areas: Prose Literacy which focuses on locating, integrating, and generating information; Quantitative Literacy which asks the respondent to perform arithmetic operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division either singly or in combination using numbers embedded in printed materials encountered in everyday situations; and Document Literacy which requires readers to locate and use information contained in materials such as tables, schedules, charts, graphs, maps, and forms.

Finally the survey asked respondents to indicate his/her perceptions of ability to read, comprehend, write, calculate mathematics, and understand areas which utilize life skills and an ability to access information from everyday materials. A four point Lykert-type scale allowed the respondent to self-assess in fifteen areas by indicating:

Very well, Well, Not well, or Not at all.

Results of Survey Analysis

Analysis of the survey data revealed that participants were comprised of 85% male and 15% female. Ages reported by inmates ranged from 18 years to 53 years with the four highest frequencies being 21 years (9.3%), 19 years (8.5%), 31 years (6.8%), and 40 years (5.9%) in descending order.

Prior incarcerations were reported by 75% (78 males and 6 females) of the responses obtained. Only 17 of the 95 male respondents indicated that they had no prior incarcerations. Nearly twice as many females (11) reported having no prior incarcerations as compared to those females indicating a history.

Figure 1 reports the highest grade completed by inmates participating in the survey. Thirty inmates reported having more than a high school education followed by 28 reporting having completed the 12th grade. More than half of the total respondents (54.7%) reported that they had not completed high school. Figure 2 depicts a greater percentage of females having completed more than a high school education as compared to males. Figure 3 indicates little difference between males and females having received a high school diplomas as compared to those reporting not having received a diploma. Figure 4 reports little difference in males and females having acquired a GED as compared to those not having completed a GED course of study.

More than one quarter (26.7%) of the inmate population reported having received special education services while in school. Figure 5 demonstrates a higher percentage of males having received services than females. Thirty-one percent of the inmates indicated that they should have received special education services and Figure 6 shows that more females felt that they should have received services as compared to males. Known learning disabilities or difficulties were reported by 27.7% of the responding inmate population. This percentage is higher than the 11% reported by inmates in the 1994 report presented by the National Center for Educational Statistics (1994).

When asked if they intended to pursue a GED, approximately one third (32.4%) of the inmates indicated a positive response. Nearly the same amount (30.6%) said that they felt that they would need tutorial or remedial services before they could access a program directed toward obtaining a GED.

The self-perception portion of the survey (Appendix A) was comprised of fifteen areas in which respondents could self-assess using a four point Lykert-type scale of Very well, Well, Not well, or Not at all. Four core areas were targeted: ability to read, ability to understand what was read, ability to write, and ability to do arithmetic. Responses demonstrated that 55.5% felt that they read very well and 37.0% indicated that they read well. The findings were reversed when the inmates were asked to rate themselves on how well they felt they understood what they read with 37.8% reporting very well and 52.9% reporting well. Thirty-five percent of inmates surveyed felt that they could write very well and 50.0% felt that they could write well. Confidence in ability to do arithmetic showed a somewhat lower self-perception in that less than one third of the inmates (31.1%) felt that they could perform very well. Forty-two percent indicated that they felt that they performed arithmetic functions well and 21.8% indicated that they perceived that they did not do well in this area. A higher incidence of not performing well also appeared in understanding banking terms and tax forms (23.7% and 33.6% respectively). Twenty-one percent felt that they did not understand tax forms at all.

Seven of the remaining self-perception questions were related to being able to understand information or complete forms found in everyday life situations. Inmates reported that they felt they were able to understand a bus schedule very well (65.0%), complete a job application very well (61.9%), use a phone book very well (70.0%), understand a want ad very well (69.2%), understand a newspaper article very well (63.9%), complete a medical form very well (39.8%), and understand label directions very well (54.2%).

The final two self-perception questions asked respondents to rate themselves on

their ability to understand written and verbal instructions. Those reporting very well on both questions were noted at 42.9% and 49.6% respectively. Those reporting not very well on both questions were noted at 11.8% and 10.9% respectively. These findings may be important in that more inmates may feel comfortable with verbal instructions because clarification is often readily available.

Inmates demonstrated a very favorable response (71.8%) when asked if they would participate in individual testing to help determine the educational needs of those housed at the Cumberland County Jail. Results of actual testing are reported under the ETS/TALS Analysis portion of this study.

Review of the National Adult Literacy Survey

In 1992, the U.S. Department of Education funded a project which examined the literacy skills of prisoners incarcerated in state and federal prisons. The project was administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and the results were published as the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS). The aim was to profile the English literacy of adults in the United States, including inmates.

Approximately 1,150 inmates in 80 federal and state prisons participated in the survey. In addition, about 24,600 adults age 16 and older residing in households were interviewed across the country including 11,000 adults in 11 states that elected to participate in a special study designed to provide state level results. This survey was the third and largest assessment of adult literacy funded by the federal government and conducted by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

A national panel of experts defined literacy as , "Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential (National Adult Literacy Survey, 1994, p. 3). The committee also indicated that it was not appropriate to express the literacy proficiencies of adults in school terms or as grade level scores. As a result, the committee further defined literacy in three scales:

Prose literacy - the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use

information from texts that include editorials, news stories, poems, and fiction; for example, finding a piece of information in a newspaper article, interpreting instructions from a warranty, inferring a theme from a poem, or contrasting news expressed in an editorial.

Document literacy - the knowledge and skills required to locate and use information contained in materials that include job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables, and graphs; for example, locating a particular intersection on a street map, using a schedule to choose the appropriate bus, or entering information on an application form.

Quantitative literacy - the knowledge and skills required to apply arithmetic operations, either alone or sequentially, using numbers embedded in printed materials; for example, balancing a checkbook, figuring out a tip, completing an order form, or determining the amount of interest from a loan advertisement. (National Survey of Adult Literature, 1994, pp. 3 - 4)

Figures 9 and 10 demonstrates the difficulty values assigned to selected tasks used in the description of the Prose, Document, and Quantitative Literacy Levels. Each scale is divided into five levels: Level 1 (0 to 225), Level 2 (226 to 275), Level 3 (276 to 325), Level 4 (326 to 375), and Level 5 (376 to 500). The points and score ranges that separate the levels on each scale represent shifts in literacy skills and strategies required to perform increasingly complex tasks. A low score (below 225) on the Document scale indicates that an individual has very limited skills in processing information from tables, charts, graphs, etc. A high score (above 375) indicates advanced skills. (National Adult Literacy Survey, 1994, pp. 7 - 9)

Methodology for TALS at CCJ

On March 31, April 1, and April 2, 1997, a team of four educational consultants, including this researcher, administered the Educational Testing Services Test of Applied Literacy Skills (ETS/TALS) to 68 inmate volunteers. Testing was simultaneously conducted in individual pods housing sample volunteers. Individuals

unavailable at these times were tested by appointment. A section of the test (Prose, Document, and Quantitative) was administered on each of the aforementioned dates and in two consecutive 20 minute intervals. Instruction was given collectively and individually, and participants worked within individual cells. Time limitations were observed as closely as possible.

Analysis of ETS/TALS

The sample consisted of 85% (56) males and 15% (12) females. Analysis revealed that 57.4% (39) inmates tested held no high school diploma or GED. Attainment of a GED was reported by 19.1% (13) of the sample and 23.5% (16) reported having a high school diploma. Figure 7 compares the percentage of males to females having no degree or high school diploma, a GED, and a high school diploma. Five ethnic groups were represented in the sample: Caucasian, African American, Asian, Native American, and Hispanic (Figure 8). Ages reported ranged from 18 years to 54 years with the three highest frequencies being 21 years (8.8%), 32 years (7.4%), and 25 years (5.9%).

In an effort to accurately report the results of ETS/TALS testing at the Cumberland County Jail, the data were divided into three groups: those reporting having no GED or high school diploma, those reporting GED attainment, and those having received a high school diploma. Table 1 reports the percentage of CCJ inmates having no diploma or GED at each of the five levels of attainment. Thirty-nine (39) members of the sample comprised this group. Means for this group were reported as: Prose 2.636, Document 2.417, and Quantitative 2.448. As compared to NALS results, CCJ inmate performance indicated that 33.3% of the participants did as well in Prose, 55.6% did as well in Document, and 13.8% did as well in Quantitative. CCJ inmates did better that NALS prison population Level 1 attainment, but were consistent with NALS household Level 2 attainment. This indicates that CCJ inmates performed as well as members of the general public who also reported not having a GED or high school diploma.

Table 2 reports the percentage of CCJ inmates having a GED at each of the five levels of attainment. Thirteen (13) members of the sample comprised this group. Means for this group were reported as : Prose 3.000, Document 2.692, and Quantitative 3.222. When compared to NALS results of Level 2 attainment, CCJ inmate performance indicated that 9.1% did as well in Prose, 30.8% did as well in Document, and 22.2% did as well in Quantitative. CCJ inmates demonstrated higher levels of attainment for this group in Prose (54.5% attained Level 3 and 27.3% attained Level 4), in Document (46.2% attained Level 3 and 15.4% attained Level 4, and in Quantitative (44.4% attained Level 3, 22.2% attained Level 4, and 11.1% attained Level 5).

Table 3 reports the percentage of CCJ inmates having a high school diploma at each of the five levels of attainment. Sixteen (16) members of the sample comprised this group. Means for the group were reported as: Prose 3.500, Document 3.400, and Quantitative 3.688. When compared to NALS results, CCJ inmate performance indicated that 6.3% did as well in Prose and 13.3% did as well in Document. CCJ inmates out performed NALS results in Quantitative. CCJ participants with a high school diploma consistently did better than the national percentages for the prison population. In Prose 93.8% performed higher than NALS Level 2 attainment. In Document 86.6% performed better than NALS Level 2 attainment, and in Quantitative 100% performed better than NALS Level 2 attainment.

Results of TALS

In both the survey sample and the sample for TALS testing, the population was overwhelmingly male (85%). Age reported was consistent, between 18 years and 53 years, with one TALS participant at 54 years. Recidivism rate was reported at 75% on the survey, but unavailable for the testing situation. No breakdown of ethnicity was reported in the survey, but five groups were represented in the testing situation. Caucasians were disproportionately represented with only 22% comprising minorities.

Those reporting no high school diploma were higher among the TALS sample

(57.4%) than among the survey sample (54.7%). GED acquisition was reported by 37.0% of the survey sample and 19.1% of the TALS sample. Those having a high school diploma were higher among the survey sample (45.3%) than the TALS sample (23.5%). More females reported having more than a high school education in the survey sample.

Special education services were received by more than one quarter (26.7%) of the inmates in the survey sample, but not reported in the TALS sample. Known learning disabilities or difficulties reported by CCJ inmates (27.7%) was more than twice that reported by the National Center for Educational Statistics (11%).

The self perception portion of the survey revealed that more than half (55.5%) of the respondents felt that they read very well. Less than one third (31.1%) felt that they performed very well in arithmetic. As a whole, inmates perceived that they were able to use materials in everyday living situations very well: bus schedules (65.0%), job applications (61.9%), phone book (70.0%), want ads (69.2%), newspaper articles (63.9%), and label directions (63.9%). TALS results revealed that only 22.8% attained Level 4 and 2.78% attained Level 5.

CCJ TALS participants with no GED or high school diploma did better, as a group, than the NALS prison population with an average Level 2 attainment in all three areas. Participants with a GED performed, as a group, better than the NALS prison population in all areas. As a whole, CCJ TALS participants consistently did better than the NALS Level 2 attainment. However, only 24 CCJ inmates received scores at Level 4 in any of the three areas and only four CCJ inmates obtained Level 5 performance in any of the three areas.

Conclusions

Caution should be exercised when comparing CCJ TALS test scores and those reported by NALS as the level of attainment for the national prison population participating in the 1992 survey. NALS has reported results based on a national sample size. Further, the NALS manual is not clear in reporting whether their sample

was drawn strictly from state and federal prisons or whether facilities like CCJ were included.

The reader should also keep in mind that if Level 1 attainment represents a low score of 225 or below, and a Level 5 attainment represents a high score of 375 or above, then a score of 300 (276 to 325) would represent the average attainment. This is one attempt at reporting scores in a nonconventional framework. Some consideration should also be given to the assignment of difficulty values depicted in Figure 9 before making any assumptions regarding individual ability levels since credit is given for partial correct responses.

Another way to interpret the results might be obtained by renaming each level: Level 1 becomes Low, Level 2 becomes Low Average, Level 3 becomes Average, Level 4 becomes Above Average, and Level 5 becomes High. Frequencies indicate that a larger percentage of scores obtained by the CCJ sample fell into the Low Average (29.4%) and Average (37.19%) ranges. CCJ inmates participating in TALS testing with no GED or high school diploma would then demonstrate the highest number of frequencies in the Low Average range. Inmates with a GED would then demonstrate the highest number of frequencies in the Average range. Inmates with a high school diploma would then demonstrate the highest number of frequencies in the Above Average range.

Discussion

The results indicate that at best CCJ inmates are functioning at or somewhat above levels shared with other inmate populations on a national level. Since no prior studies have been reported, it is difficult to determine if the results represent a consistent picture of the inmate population. A daily flow of incarcerations and releases creates a flux in the inmate population and difficulty in obtaining more accurate levels of need. The study does point to the fact that inmates have a variety of needs including: instruction geared toward remedial services for learning disabilities and difficulties, a need for tutorial services that will enable them to meet with greater success in

pursuing a GED, and learning opportunities that will enable them to better access areas which are life skill based.

Notwithstanding, CCJ inmates did not demonstrate levels that matched those reported in the self-perception survey. Inmates did only as well as members of the general population who also reported not having a GED or high school diploma. Those with a GED or high school diploma did better in all areas further supporting the need for quality educational programs for all segments of our population particularly those in under served areas like correctional facilities.

Recommendations

The year 2000 has been targeted both nationally and by the State of Maine as a point in time when all adults will be literate. The Fifth Goal of Goals For The Year 2000, as adopted by the Maine Department of Education, reads: " All Maine adults will be literate and will be prepared for lifelong learning, responsible citizenship, and productive employment" (October, 1992, p.13). This should include adult populations housed in county and state corrections facilities.

Most CCJ did not demonstrate proficiency levels that assure an ability to meet with the demands of society, or assure economic and social successes. Educational opportunities should be made for the portion of the population experiencing learning disabilities or difficulties. Educational facilitators and planners responsible for educational programming should make every effort to insure that opportunities are made for the learning disabled as they work toward developing methods of instruction that enhance learning opportunities. However, facilitators and planners should not be expected to work in isolation. Support should be sought from the greater community: qualified individuals (teachers), businesses, and local colleges and universities should be expected to play a substantial role. On going assessment of inmate needs and educational levels of performance, and the development of programs geared toward life skills, vocational training, ESL, and post secondary education should be considered.

Limitations

The results of this study are pertinent only to the inmate population housed at the Cumberland County Jail and is not intended to be generalizable to a larger population although data may be used in assessing the needs of like facilities. The survey tool was designed expressly for the CCJ inmate population and was highly dependent on the number of inmates volunteering to participate in the study. While the return rate of 62.244% is considered good, it does not provide data representing the entire population. It does however provide valuable insight into the needs of the inmate population. And, as previously discussed, caution should be exercised in comparing CCJ TALS results with NALS prison populations because of the vast difference in sample size.

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Appendix A

Cumberland County Jail
Inmate Educational Survey

This survey has been designed to help determine the educational needs of the inmate population at the Cumberland County Jail. Your participation is very important. Please do not include your name. A separate sign up sheet will be made available for those of you interested in Question 12. Feel free to ask any questions you may have. Thank you for your participation.

1. What is your gender? Male Female
2. What is your age? _____
3. Have you been incarcerated before? Yes No
4. What is the highest educational grade which you completed? Elementary 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 12+
5. Do you have a high school diploma? Yes No
6. Do you have a GED? Yes No
7. Did you receive Special Education Services while in school? Yes No
8. Do you feel that you should have received Special Education Services while in school? Yes No
9. Do you have any known learning disabilities or difficulties? Yes No
10. Do you intend to access the GED program while you are here? Yes No
11. Will you need help in learning areas before you can study for your GED? Yes No

12. Would you be willing to take part in reading and mathematics testing to help determine educational needs? Yes No

13. Please answer the following Self-Perception questions:

A. I feel that I read... Very well Well Not well Not at all

B. I feel that I understand what I read.....Very well Well Not well Not at all

C. I feel that I write.. Very well Well Not well Not at all

D. I feel that I do arithmetic.....Very well Well Not well Not at all

E. I feel that I understand bus schedules.....Very well Well Not well Not at all

F. I feel that I can complete job applications .....Very well Well Not well Not at all

G. I feel that I use a phone book.....Very well Well Not well Not at all

H. I feel that I understand want ads.....Very well Well Not well Not at all

I. I feel that I understand newspaper articles...Very well Well Not well Not at all

J. I feel that I understand banking terms.....Very well Well Not well Not at all

K. I feel that I can complete medical forms.....Very well Well Not well Not at all

L. I feel that I understand label directions .....Very well Well Not well Not at all

M. I feel that I understand tax forms.....Very well Well Not well Not at all

N. I feel that I understand
written instructions..Very well Well Not well Not at all

O. I feel that I understand
verbal instructions...Very well Well Not well Not at all

Table 1
TALS Scores CCJ Inmates Reporting No Diploma/GED

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Prose	9.1% (3)	33.3% (11)	45.5% (15)	9.1% (3)	3.0% (1)
Document	8.3% (3)	55.6% (20)	22.2% (8)	13.9% (5)	0% (0)
Quantitative	13.8% (4)	41.4% (12)	34.5% (10)	6.9% (2)	3.4% (1)

Average age 29.00 years.

Table 2
TALS Scores CCJ Inmates Reporting GED Attainment

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Prose	9.1% (1)	9.1% (1)	54.5% (6)	27.3% (3)	0% (0)
Document	7.7% (1)	30.8% (4)	46.2% (6)	15.4% (2)	0% (0)
Quantitative	0% (0)	22.2% (2)	44.4% (4)	22.2% (2)	11.1% (1)

Average age 30.615 years.

Table 3
TALS Scores CCJ Inmates Reporting High School Diploma

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Prose	0% (0)	6.3% (1)	37.5% (6)	56.3% (9)	0% (0)
Document	0% (0)	13.3% (2)	33.3% (5)	53.3% (8)	0% (0)
Quantitative	0% (0)	0% (0)	43.8% (7)	43.8% (7)	12.5% (2)

Average age 32.188 years.

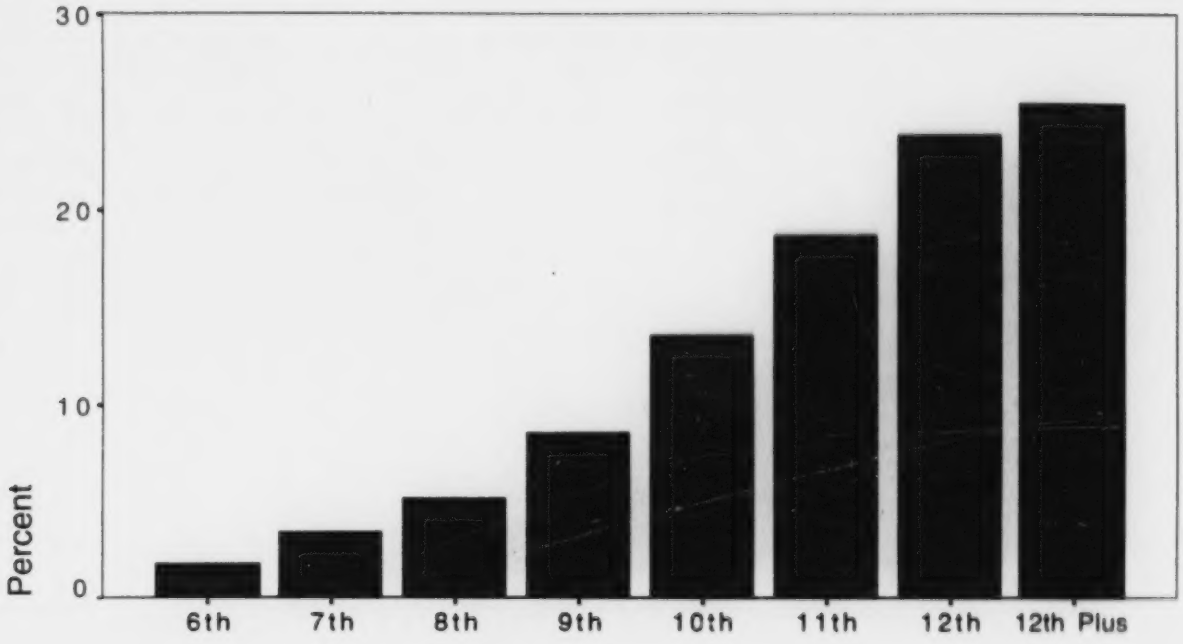

Figure 1 Highest Grade Completed

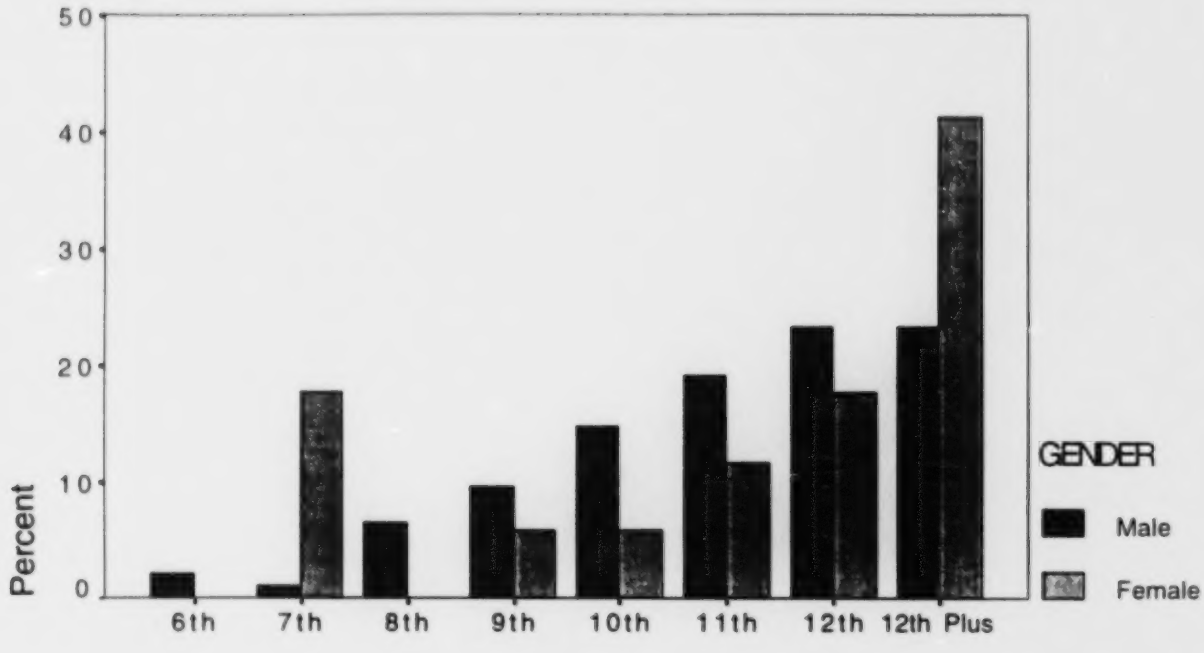

Figure 2 Highest Grade Completed by Gender

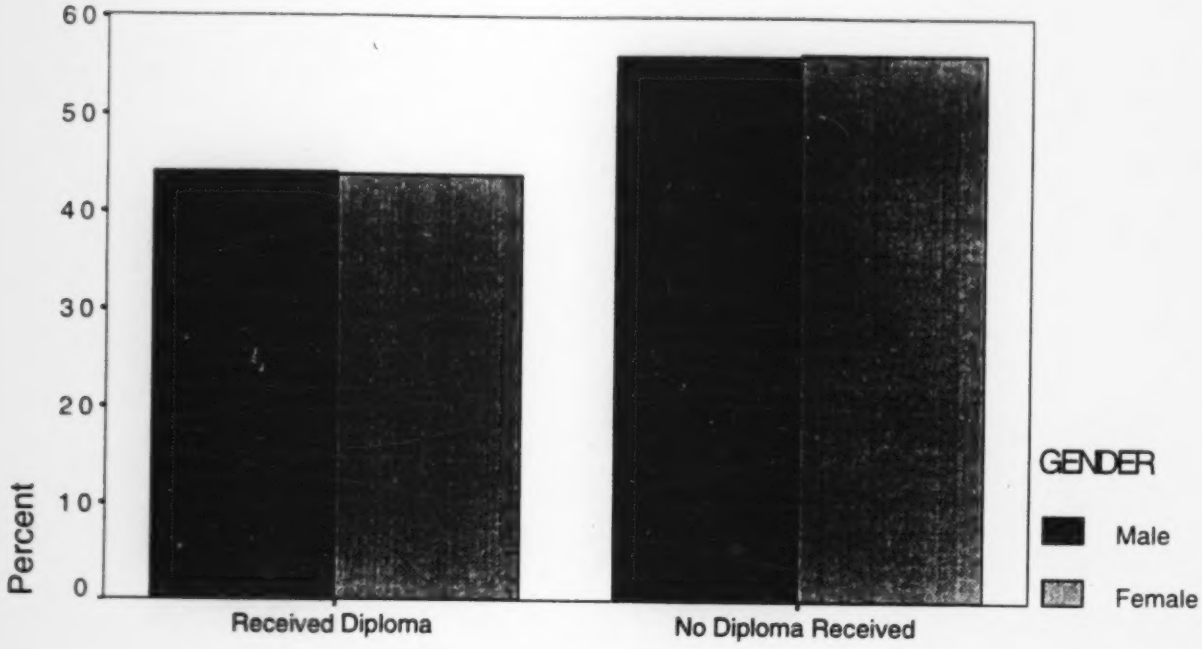

Figure 3 Diploma by Gender

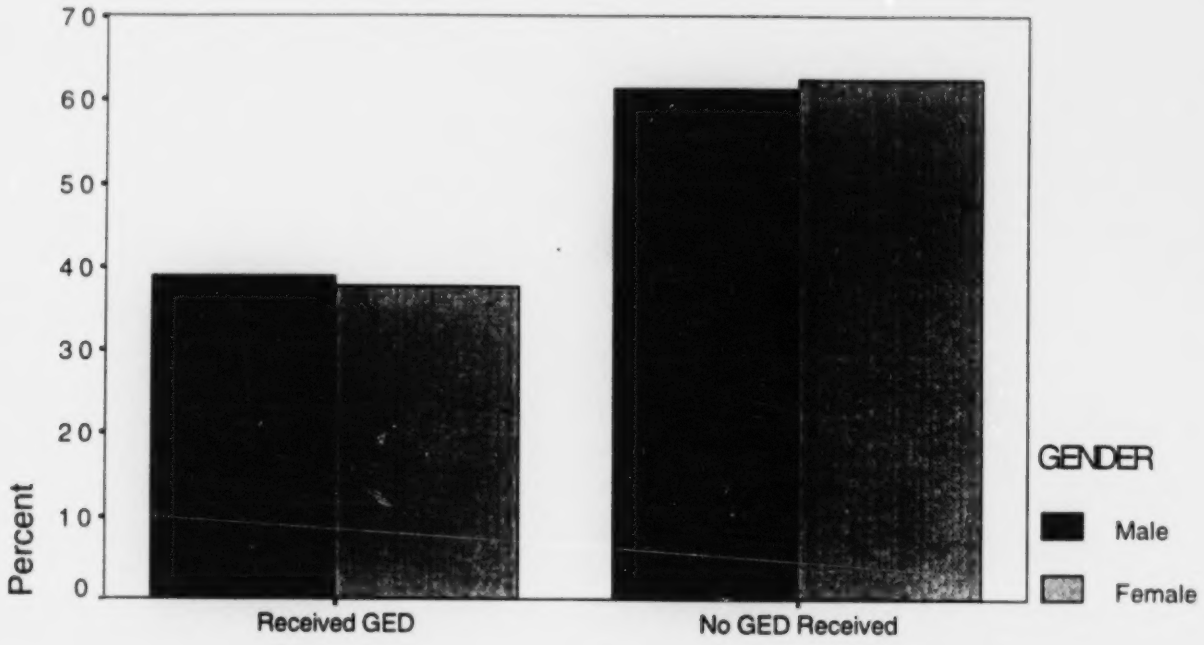

Figure 4 GED by Gender

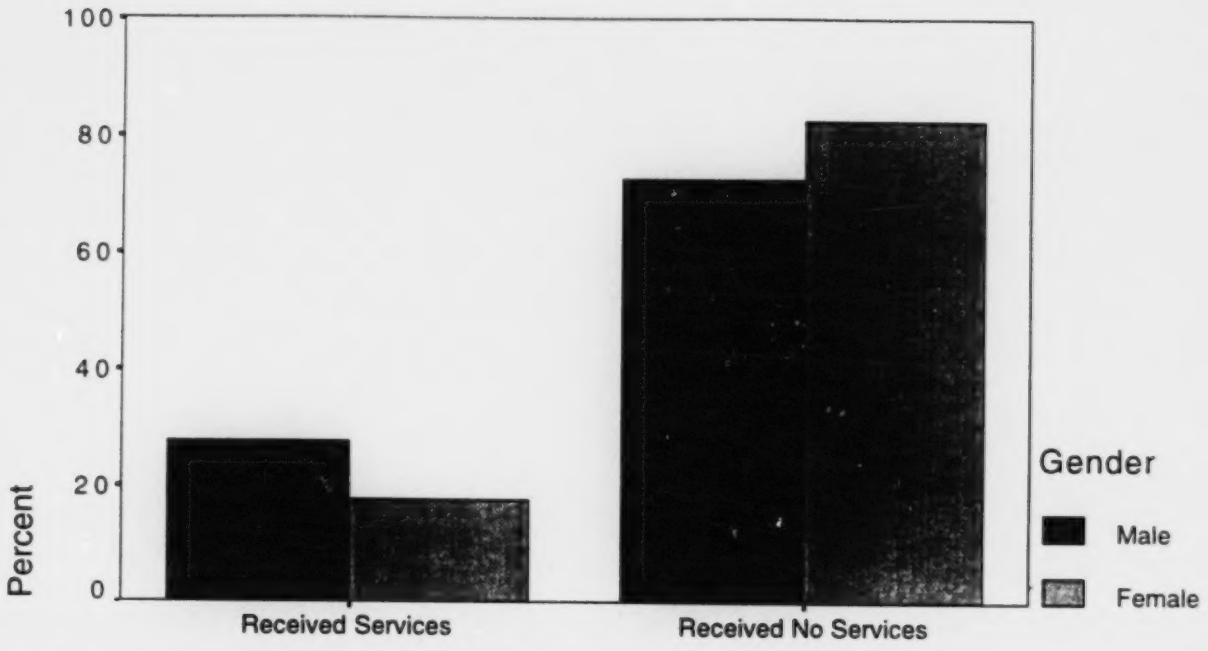

Figure 5 Received Sp. Ed.

Figure 6 Perceived Sp. Ed. Needs by Gender

Figure 7 TALS CCJ Inmate Degree By Gender

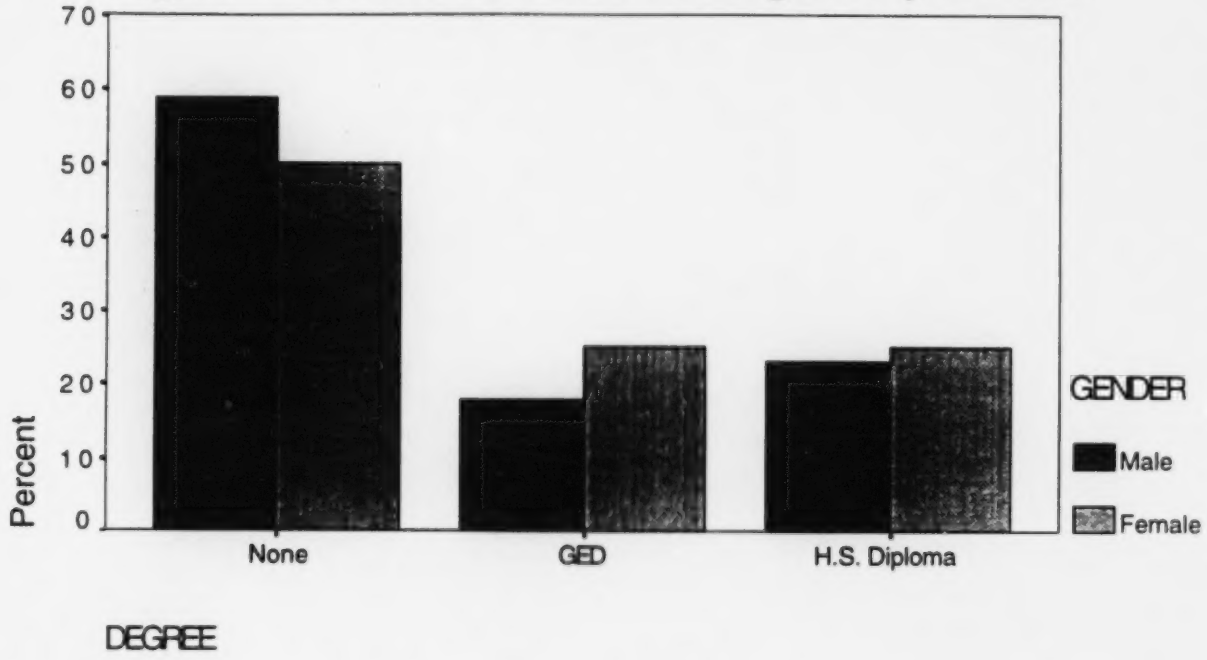

Figure 8 TALS CCJ Inmate Ethnicity

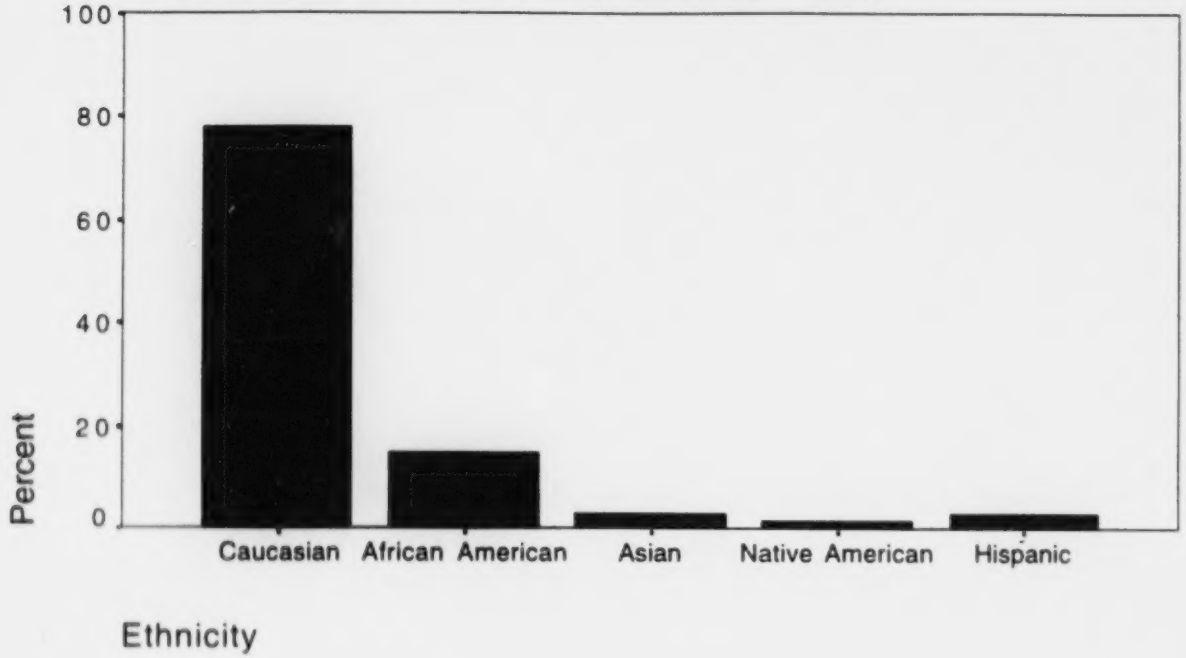

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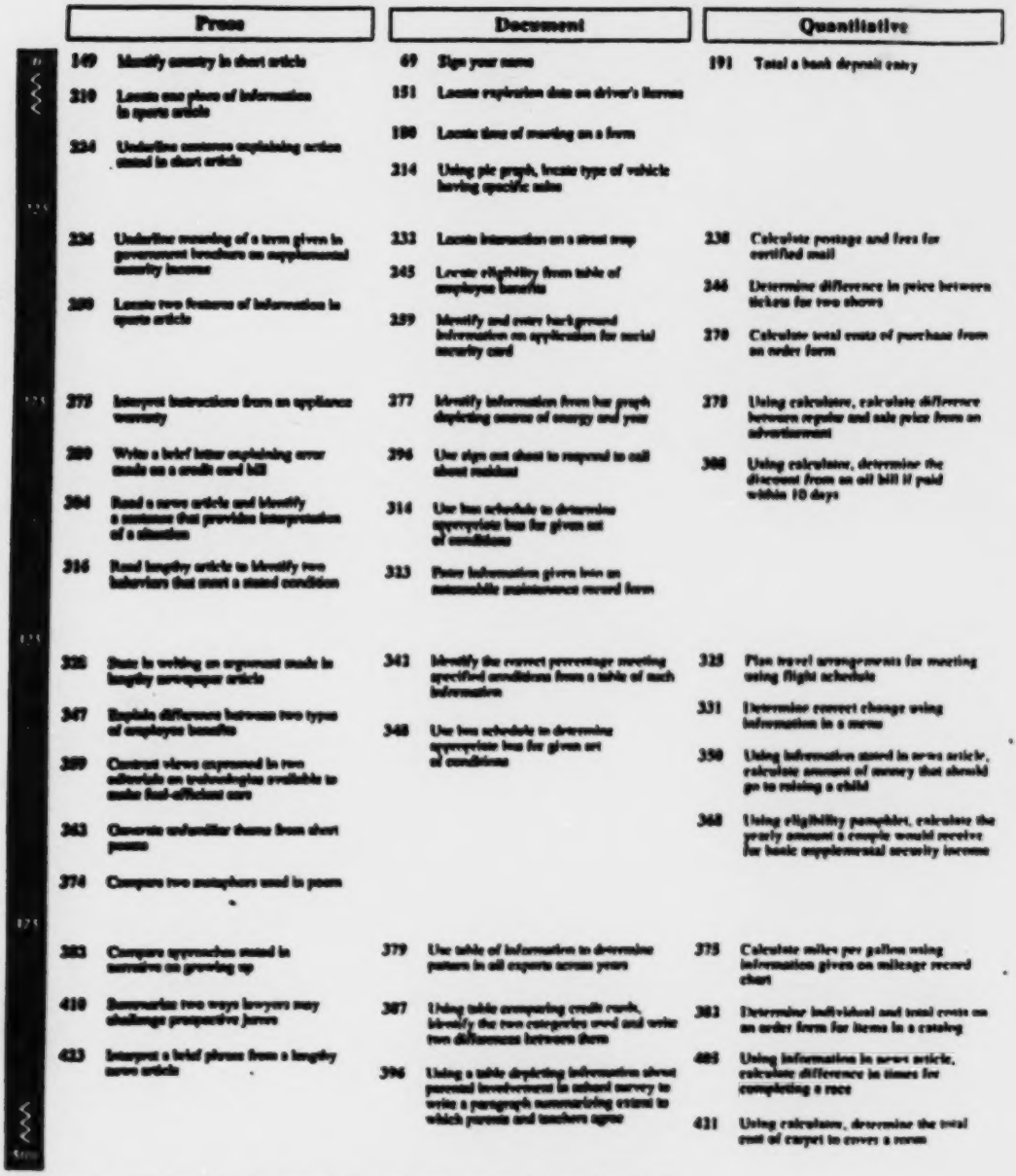
Figure 9

Difficulty Values of Selected Tasks Along the Prose, Document, and Quantitative Literacy Scales


Prose
Document
Quantitative
149 Identify country in short article
210 Locate one piece of information in sports article
224 Underline sentence explaining action stated in short article
236 Underline meaning of a term given in government brochure on supplemental security income
280 Locate two features of information in sports article
278 Interpret instructions from an appliance warranty
289 Write a brief letter explaining error made on a credit card bill
304 Read a news article and identify a sentence that provides interpretation of a situation
316 Read lengthy article to identify two behaviors that meet a stated condition
325 State in writing an argument made in lengthy newspaper article
347 Explain difference between two types of employee benefits
309 Contrast views expressed in two editorials on technologies available to make food efficient cars
363 Generate unfamiliar theme from short poems
374 Compare two metaphors used in poem
383 Compare approaches stated in narrative on growing up
410 Summarize two ways lawyers may challenge prospective jurors
433 Interpret a brief phrase from a lengthy news article
69 Sign your name
151 Locate expiration date on driver's license
190 Locate time of meeting on a form
214 Using pie graph, locate type of vehicle having specific color
232 Locate intersection on a street map
245 Locate eligibility from table of employee benefits
259 Identify and enter background information on application for social security card
277 Identify information from bar graph depicting source of energy and year
296 Use sign out sheet to respond to call about resident
314 Use bus schedule to determine appropriate bus for given set of conditions
323 Enter information given into an automobile maintenance record form
342 Identify the correct percentage meeting specified conditions from a table of such information
348 Use bus schedule to determine appropriate bus for given set of conditions
379 Use table of information to determine pattern in oil exports across years
387 Using table comparing credit cards, identify the two categories used and write two differences between them
396 Using a table depicting information about parental involvement in school survey to write a paragraph summarizing extent to which parents and teachers agree
191 Total a bank deposit entry
238 Calculate postage and fees for certified mail
246 Determine difference in price between tickets for two shows
270 Calculate total costs of purchase from an order form
278 Using calculator, calculate difference between regular and sale price from an advertisement
308 Using calculator, determine the discount from an oil bill if paid within 10 days
325 Plan travel arrangements for meeting using flight schedule
331 Determine correct change using information in a menu
350 Using information stated in news article, calculate amount of money that should go to raising a child
368 Using eligibility pamphlet, calculate the yearly amount a couple would receive for basic supplemental security income
375 Calculate miles per gallon using information given on mileage record chart
383 Determine individual and total costs on an order form for items in a catalog
405 Using information in news article, calculate difference in times for completing a race
421 Using calculator, determine the total cost of carpet to cover a room

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992.

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Figure 10

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Description of the Prose, Document, and Quantitative Literacy Levels

	Prose	Document	Quantitative
Level 1 0-225	Most of the tasks in this level require the reader to read relatively short text to locate a single piece of information which is identical to or synonymous with the information given in the question or directive. If plausible but incorrect information is present in the text, it tends not to be located near the correct information.	Tasks in this level tend to require the reader either to locate a piece of information based on a literal match or to enter information from personal knowledge onto a document. Little, if any, distracting information is present.	Tasks in this level require readers to perform single, relatively simple arithmetic operations, such as addition. The numbers to be used are provided and the arithmetic operation to be performed is specified.
Level 2 226-275	Some tasks in this level require readers to locate a single piece of information in the text; however, several distracters or plausible but incorrect pieces of information may be present, or low-level inferences may be required. Other tasks require the reader to integrate two or more pieces of information or to compare and contrast easily identifiable information based on a criterion provided in the question or directive.	Tasks in this level are more varied than those in Level 1. Some require the readers to match a single piece of information; however, several distracters may be present, or the match may require low-level inferences. Tasks in this level may also ask the reader to cycle through information in a document or to integrate information from various parts of a document.	Tasks in this level typically require readers to perform a single operation using numbers that are either stated in the task or easily located in the material. The operation to be performed may be stated in the question or easily determined from the format of the material (for example, an order form).
Level 3 276-325	Tasks in this level tend to require readers to make literal or synonymous matches between the text and information given in the task, or to make matches that require low-level inferences. Other tasks ask readers to integrate information from dense or lengthy text that contains no organizational aids such as headings. Readers may also be asked to generate a response based on information that can be easily identified in the text. Distracting information is present, but is not located near the correct information.	Some tasks in this level require the reader to integrate multiple pieces of information from one or more documents. Others ask readers to cycle through rather complex tables or graphs which contain information that is irrelevant or inappropriate to the task.	In tasks in this level, two or more numbers are typically needed to solve the problem, and these must be found in the material. The operation(s) needed can be determined from the arithmetic relation terms used in the question or directive.
Level 4 326-375	These tasks require readers to perform multiple-feature matches and to integrate or synthesize information from complex or lengthy passages. More complex inferences are needed to perform successfully. Conditional information is frequently present in tasks at this level and must be taken into consideration by the reader.	Tasks in this level, like those at the previous levels, ask readers to perform multiple-feature matches, cycle through documents, and integrate information; however, they require a greater degree of inferencing. Many of these tasks require readers to provide numerous responses but do not designate how many responses are needed. Conditional information is also present in the document tasks at this level and must be taken into account by the reader.	These tasks tend to require readers to perform two or more sequential operations or a single operation in which the quantities are found in different types of displays, or the operations must be inferred from semantic information given or drawn from prior knowledge.
Level 5 376-500	Some tasks in this level require the reader to search for information in dense text which contains a number of plausible distracters. Others ask readers to make high-level inferences or use specialized background knowledge. Some tasks ask readers to contrast complex information.	Tasks in this level require the reader to search through complex displays that contain multiple distracters, to make high-level text-based inferences, and to use specialized knowledge.	These tasks require readers to perform multiple operations sequentially. They must disembed the features of the problem from text or rely on background knowledge to determine the quantities or operations needed.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992

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